LODI HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Incorporated October 20, 1988

# LODI HISTORIAN

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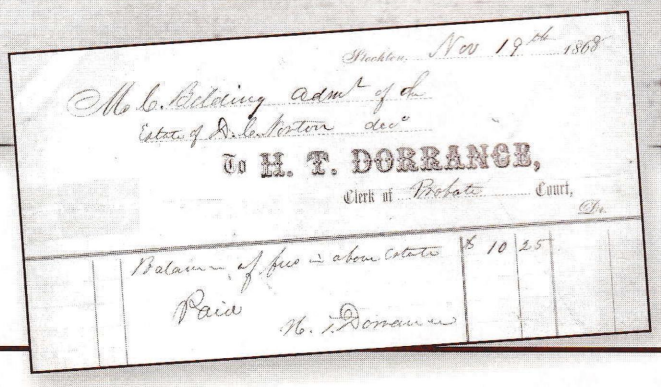
## EARLY STOCKTON MERCHANTS

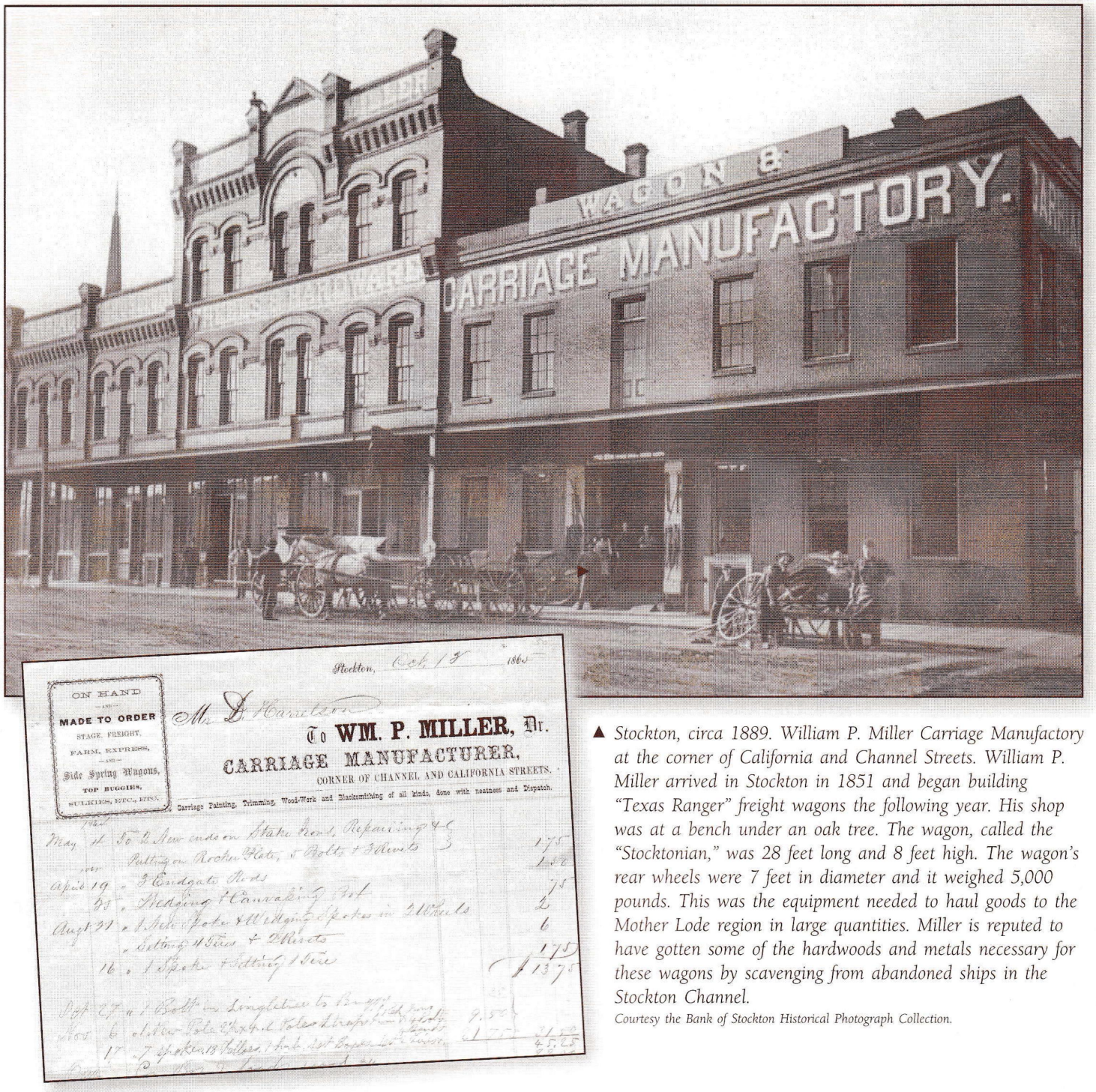
*By Ralph Lea and Janice Roth*

The Stockton of 1849 was a canvas city with about 1000 inhabitants and 25 ships at anchor in its port. After the fire of May 6, 1851 the town grew rapidly along the business lines, with wood buildings being the norm. It wasn't until after the fire of February 21, 1855 that an ordinance was passed prohibiting the erection of wooden buildings in the business area of town.

In 1849, John Doak and Jacob Bonsell built a ferryboat on the San Joaquin River at Moss Landing. This ferry helped move people in and out of the county to places like Sacramento and San Francisco. A few years later bridges in the county were being built starting with Leach & Frost Ranch Bridge on the Calaveras River in 1854. Four years later a bridge at Woodbridge was constructed followed by a bridge at Staples Ferry and then Lockeford. The bridges on the


Stockton, Nov 12th 1868
M. C. Belding admr of &c
Estate of D. L. Norton dec'd
To H. T. DORRANCE,
Clerk of Probate Court, Dr.
Balance of fees on above Estate $8 10 25
Paid H. T. Dorrance

▲ *Stockton, 1895; Hunter Square Plaza, looking northwest. H.T. Dorrance purchased the store in 1868, starting his career in the saddlery and harness business.*





Stockton, Oct 15 1865

ON HAND
AND
MADE TO ORDER
STAGE, FREIGHT,
FARM, EXPRESS,
AND
Side Spring Wagons,
TOP BUGGIES,
SULKIES, ETC., ETC.

Mr. D. Harrelson

To WM. P. MILLER, Dr.

CARRIAGE MANUFACTURER,

CORNER OF CHANNEL AND CALIFORNIA STREETS.

Carriage Painting, Trimming, Wood-Work and Blacksmithing of all kinds, done with neatness and Dispatch.

1865

May 1 To 2 New ends on State Road, Repairing 4-6 3 1.75
" Putting on Rocker Plate, 5 Bolts & 3 Rivets 1.00
April 19 " 2 Endgate Rods .75
" 20 " Hedging & Canvaking Bot 2
Aug 31 " 1 Hole Spoke & Wedging Spokes in 2 Wheels 6
" Setting 4 Tires & 8 Rivets 1.75
16 " 1 Spoke & Setting 1 Tire $13.75
Sept 27 " 1 Bolt in Singletree to Buggy
Nov 6 " 1 New Pole 2 Hx4 & Poles Straps
17 " 7 Spokes 18 Felloes 1 Hub

▲ *Stockton, circa 1889. William P. Miller Carriage Manufactory at the corner of California and Channel Streets. William P. Miller arrived in Stockton in 1851 and began building "Texas Ranger" freight wagons the following year. His shop was at a bench under an oak tree. The wagon, called the "Stocktonian," was 28 feet long and 8 feet high. The wagon's rear wheels were 7 feet in diameter and it weighed 5,000 pounds. This was the equipment needed to haul goods to the Mother Lode region in large quantities. Miller is reputed to have gotten some of the hardwoods and metals necessary for these wagons by scavenging from abandoned ships in the Stockton Channel.*

*Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.*

Mokelumne River helped move people and supplies to the stage lines.

The discovery of gold on the American River in January of 1848 had a great effect on Stockton by attracting settlers to this new town the would soon become a supply base for the mines in the southern portion of the Mother Lode. William P. Miller and a little later M.P. Henderson built wagons, drays, buckboards and carriages.

The manufacture of flour in Stockton commenced in 1852 by Austin Sperry and S. M. Baldwin at the corner of Main & Commerce Streets. It had started as a barley mill.

The town started to manufacture all kinds of agricultural implements to supply the area farmers. Harvesters, gang or reversible plows, discs and harrows were some of the items manufactured in the area. The Holt Manufacturing Co. developed and manufactured a tractor using tracks in place of wheels and became world famous.

The Stockton Iron Works invented and built the Clam Shell Dredging Bucket that helped to reclaim the delta and keep the shipping channels open. Jacob Wagner ran a large tannery. The El Dorado Brewery and the Great Winery of George West & Co. were among other businesses of the day.

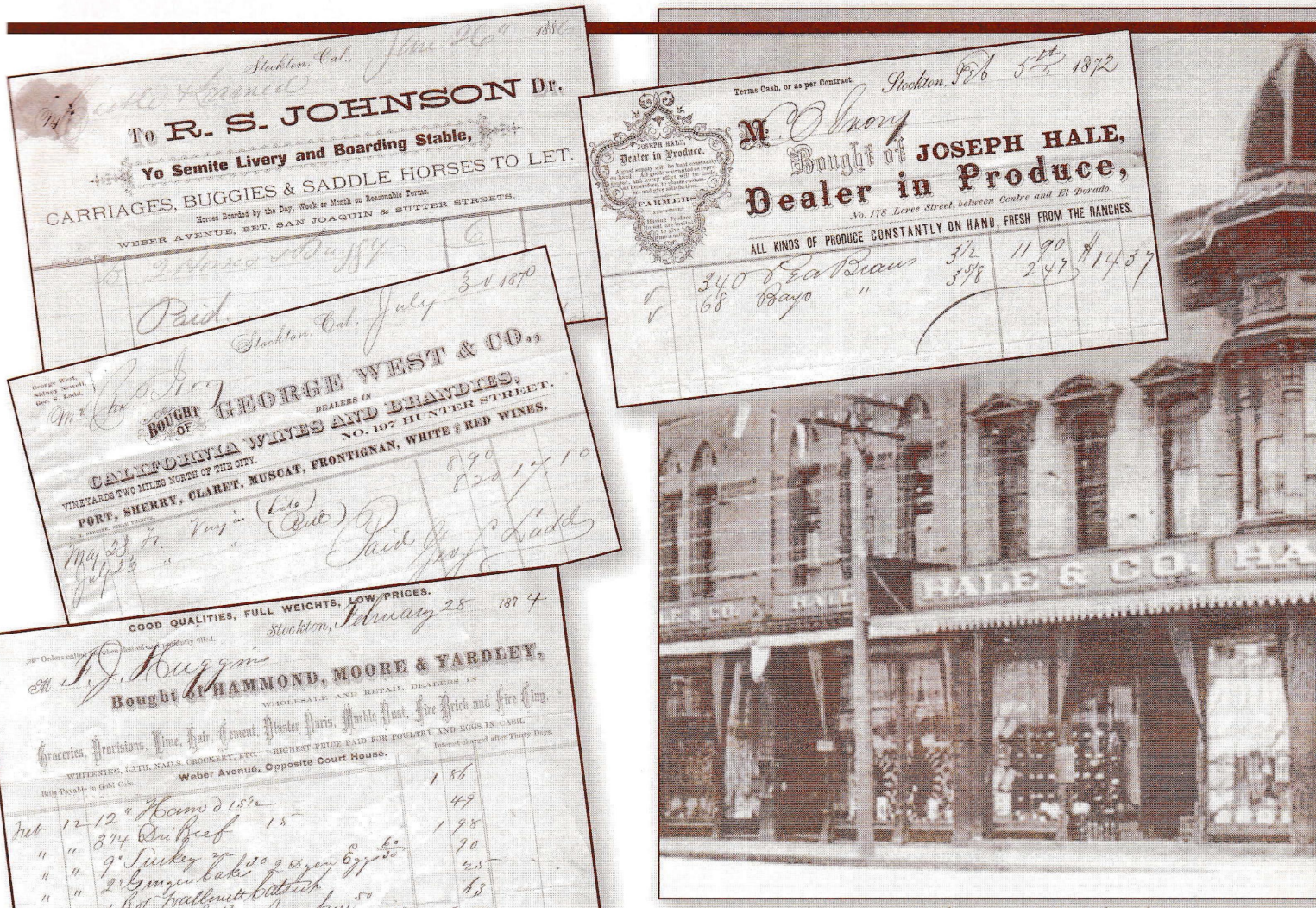
By 1869 Stockton had railroad tracks connecting it to cities all over the United States. A year later the tracks laid up Weber Ave., from Center Street at the port, connected with the Stockton & Copperopolis and Central Pacific. Another great addition to transportation was the daily arrival of the steamboat at the Stockton port. Merchants were able to stock their shelves with goods from around the United States and the world. They built larger brick buildings to replace the smaller wooden structures.

Stockton was growing by leaps and bounds. In 1850 there were 1500 residents, 1854 there were 7000 residents, 1876 there were 14,000 and by 1900 there were 23,000 living in Stockton. Stockton's closeness to the delta and the heart of the valley that connects the sea and mountains made it an ideal location for the growth of many businesses.

Stockton became a major transportation hub in its early days. With trains and steamers bring passengers and freight daily there was a need for hotels and eating-places. Hotels and restaurants such as the St. Charles, Stockton House, Yosemite House and the Imperial Hotel soon became the places to stay.

Stockton industry played an important part in the development and growth of San Joaquin County, the Delta, and the Mother Lode.

*Stockton, circa 1875; Hunter Square: H.S. Sargent and Company, right next door to H. T. Dorrance and Company.*
*Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.* ▼

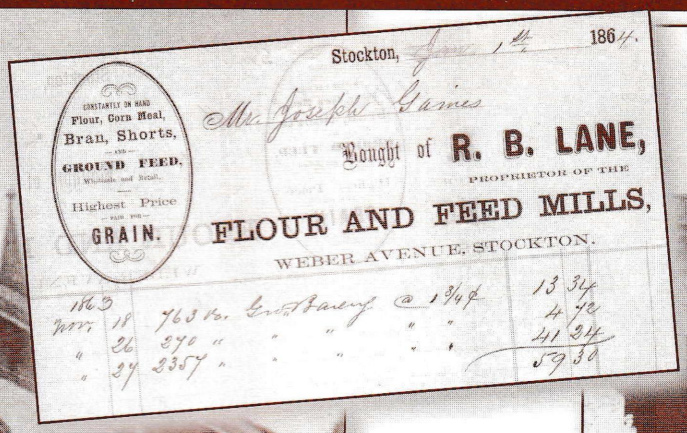

To R. S. JOHNSON Dr.
Yo Semite Livery and Boarding Stable,
CARRIAGES, BUGGIES & SADDLE HORSES TO LET.
WEBER AVENUE, BET. SAN JOAQUIN & SUTTER STREETS.
Paid.
Terms Cash, or as per Contract.
Bought of JOSEPH HALE,
Dealer in Produce,
No. 178 Levee Street, between Centre and El Dorado.
ALL KINDS OF PRODUCE CONSTANTLY ON HAND, FRESH FROM THE RANCHES.
Bought of GEORGE WEST & CO.,
DEALERS IN
CALIFORNIA WINES AND BRANDIES,
VINEYARDS TWO MILES NORTH OF THE CITY. NO. 197 HUNTER STREET.
PORT, SHERRY, CLARET, MUSCAT, FRONTIGNAN, WHITE & RED WINES.
GOOD QUALITIES, FULL WEIGHTS, LOW PRICES.
Bought of HAMMOND, MOORE & YARDLEY,
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DEALERS IN
Groceries, Provisions, Lime, Hair, Cement, Plaster Paris, Marble Dust, Fire Brick and Fire Clay,
WHITENING, LATH, NAILS, CROCKERY, ETC. —HIGHEST PRICE PAID FOR POULTRY AND EGGS IN CASH.
Weber Avenue, Opposite Court House.
HALE & CO.

*Stockton, circa 1895; Hale and Company Department*

▲ *Stockton, circa 1907; The Hammond, Moore & Yardley Grocery Store, located at 233 E. Weber Avenue, provided choice groceries and builders' hardware.* Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.

▲ *George West, proprietor of the El Pinal Vineyard and Winery, arrived in Stockton in 1852. His store was located at 197 Hunter Street, while the winery itself was two miles north of the city.*
Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.

tore on the corner of Main and San Joaquin Streets. ▲
Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.


Stockton, June 14 1864.

Mr. Joseph Gaines

Bought of **R. B. LANE,**

PROPRIETOR OF THE

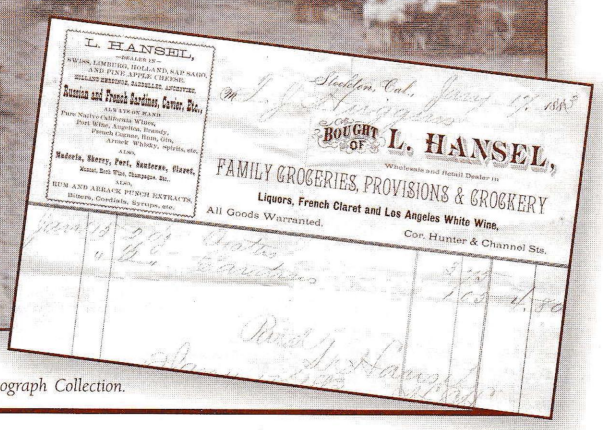
**FLOUR AND FEED MILLS,**

WEBER AVENUE, STOCKTON.

CONSTANTLY ON HAND
Flour, Corn Meal,
Bran, Shorts,
AND
GROUND FEED,
Wholesale and Retail.
Highest Price
PAID FOR
GRAIN.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1863 | | | | |
| Nov. | 18 | 763 lbs. Cut Barley | @ 1¾¢ | 13 34 |
| " | 26 | 270 " " " " | | 4 72 |
| " | 27 | 2357 " " " " | | 41 24 |
| | | | | 59 30 |

*Top Photo: Stockton, circa 1875; Rufus B. Lane's Flour Mills on Weber Avenue at Sutter Street. The site was later occupied by the Newberry Store. Bottom Photo: Stockton circa 1875; Weber Avenue, looking west from Sutter Street: Johnson's Stable, Stockton and Copperopolis Railroad Company. Note that Weber Avenue is unpaved.* ▲
*Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.*


L. HANSEL,

DEALER IN

Wines, Liquors, Holland, Sap Sago, and Pine Apple Cheese,

Holland Herring, Pickled Anchovies,

Russian and French Sardines, Caviar, &c.,

Also Wine of

Pure Native California Wines,

Port Wine, Angelica, Brandy,

French Cognac, Rum, Gin,

Arrack Whisky, Spirits, etc.

Also,

Madeira, Sherry, Port, Santerne, Claret,

Muscat, Rose Wine, Champagne, &c.

Also,

Rum and Arrack Punch Extracts,

Bitters, Cordials, Syrups, etc.

Stockton, Cal., January 17, 1880

Mr. J. Langdon

Bought of **L. HANSEL,**

Wholesale and Retail Dealer in

FAMILY GROCERIES, PROVISIONS & CROCKERY

Liquors, French Claret and Los Angeles White Wine,

All Goods Warranted. Cor. Hunter & Channel Sts.

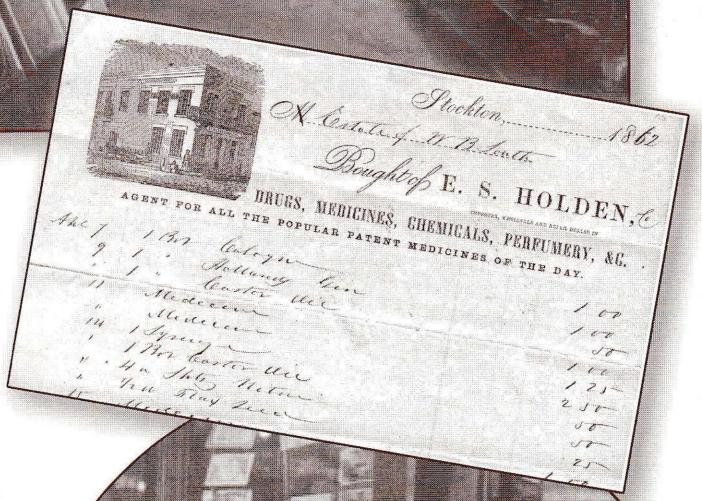
Jan 14 20 Qrts Claret 3 50 4 50

" 16 Qrts " 3 50 4 50

Rec'd Payment

L. Hansel

▲ *Stockton, circa 1878; Hunter Square and Channel Street. Louis Hansel Grocers and Mansion House on the right. The pioneer grocery store started in 1850.* *Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.*


Stockton, 1862
Bought of E. S. HOLDEN, &c
DRUGS, MEDICINES, CHEMICALS, PERFUMERY, &C.
AGENT FOR ALL THE POPULAR PATENT MEDICINES OF THE DAY.

▲ *Stockton, circa 1925; The Holden Drug Company, was founded by Erastus Saurin Holden. Born in 1813 in Maine, he was a graduate of Massachusetts College of Pharmacy. He began his career as a druggist in Boston, married Jane E. Dana in 1840 in Boston and had one son, Isaac Dana Holden.*

*Holden left Boston late in 1849 for California, arriving in San Francisco in early 1850. He initially went to Sonora to prospect, but soon returned to San Francisco and organized a wholesale drug firm with partners John H. Reddington and Charles Story. The firm was called Reddington & Company.*

*The firm was dissolved in 1852, with Holden receiving the Sonora and Stockton branches of the business. He settled in Stockton to manage the store which served the southern mines.*

*Holden went on to be a Vice President of the Western Pacific Railroad, organized the Stockton & Copperopolis Railroad and the Stockton & Ione Railroad. He also located the Copperopolis mines served by the railroad.*

*He was one of the original promoters of the San Joaquin Valley Agricultural Society and served as its president for several years. Holden was the chief contributor to the library in the Agricultural Hall.*

*He owned several farms around Stockton, in all about 1,500 acres. Because of his success with these farms, Holden was regarded as an authority on stock and general agriculture.*

*Erastus S. Holden was the first Vice President of the State Agricultural Society in 1856. He also served as the President of the Board of Directors for the State Insane Asylum in Stockton and as Commissioner of the Yosemite Valley.*

*A brick house of nine rooms was built, among the first large houses in Stockton, covering a whole block with cultivated grounds, including plants from Mexico and Japan.*

*He served as Mayor of Stockton in 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862 and 1871.*

*Having been widowed in 1852 when his first wife, Jane, died in Boston, he remarried Maria M. Lyon, born in 1840. She was the daughter of Captain Lemuel Lyon, United States Consul to Japan under President Grant. They had three sons; Wilson F., Erastus, and Warren P. In 1856, Isaac Dana Holden joined his father in California. In 1860 he entered the drug store business on Main and El Dorado as a clerk, manager and proprietor.*

*He became the sole proprietor in 1879. The Holdens moved to San Francisco in 1880 because of Erastus' ill health due to overwork. He died on August 11, 1885.*

*Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection for both photographs.*

▶ *Five female employees of the Holden Drug Store are shown in the doorway of the store identified as Mrs. Conger, Ella, Mabel, Hazel and Clara.*

*Henry C. Shaw was born in Steuben, Maine on November 8, 1833. His parents were William N. Shaw, born November 12, 1783 and his wife, Nancy D. Steven. Henry C. Shaw was the tenth child and sixth son in his family. At the age of thirteen he entered the Phillips Academy in Andover.*

*After completing his education, he went to Boston and was engaged as clerk with the firm of Horatio Harris & Co. at Number 8, India Street. He worked there until 1851 when he decided to go to California.*

*He sailed on the clipper ship "Shooting Star" from Nantucket. Damaged in the gulf stream, the ship put into Rio de Janeiro for repairs. She left for San Francisco, arriving at her destination after 144 days.*

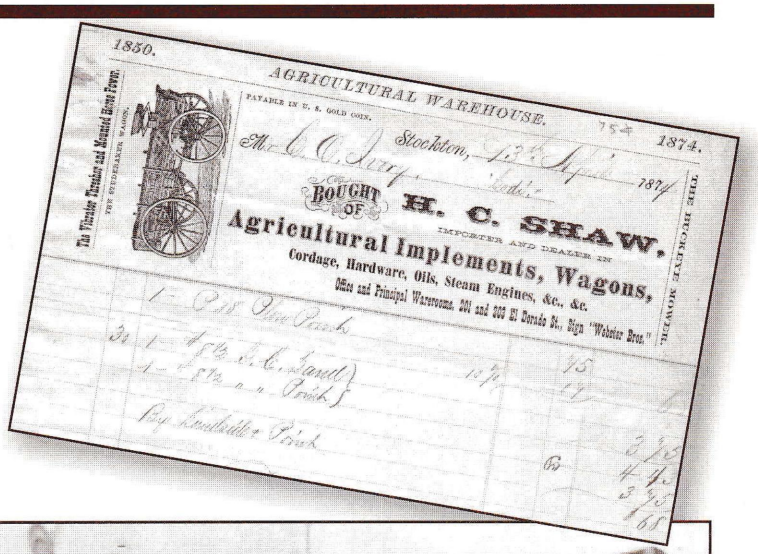
*George N. Shaw, Henry's brother, was in business in San Francisco on Battery Street. One week after arriving at his brother's place of business, Shaw witnessed the hanging of two men by the San Francisco Vigilance Committee, just one block away. He was so depressed by this violence that he left for Hawaii, spending the next five or six months there.*

*He returned to California and decided to try his luck in the gold fields. After just a short time at work on the north fork of the Feather River at Potter's Bar, he became ill. He returned to San Francisco and then to Honolulu, Hawaii where his health improved.*

*Going to the Washington Territory, he located at an Indian trading post on Neah Bay. At first he was associated with C. L. Strong, but later went into the trading business for himself. He visited the northern tribes as far away as Queen Charlotte's Island. During this time he became proficient in half a dozen Indian dialects. He spent three years in the Pacific Northwest before joining his brother in the Washoe District of Nevada where he was a mining operator.*

*Shaw left for California, making it to Calaveras Big Trees where he was again taken ill, forcing him to return to Neah Bay. After one year there, he came back to California and located in Stockton where he began an agricultural implement business. He established a plow works in 1879. He imported and manufactured a variety of agricultural implements, and familiarized himself with the needs of farmers raising a wide number of crops.*

*He was member of the Morning Star Lodge, Free & Accepted Masons, the Stockton Commandery, and the I.O.O.F. He was an exempt member of the Weber Engine Company and served as the First Lieutenant of the Stockton City Guard.*


1850.

AGRICULTURAL WAREHOUSE.

The Wheeler Reaction and Mowing Grain Drill.

THE STEPHENSON WAGON.

PAYABLE IN U. S. GOLD COIN.

Stockton, 1874.

Mr. C. C. Sharp

Bought of H. C. SHAW,

IMPORTER AND DEALER IN

Agricultural Implements, Wagons,

Cordage, Hardware, Oils, Steam Engines, &c., &c.

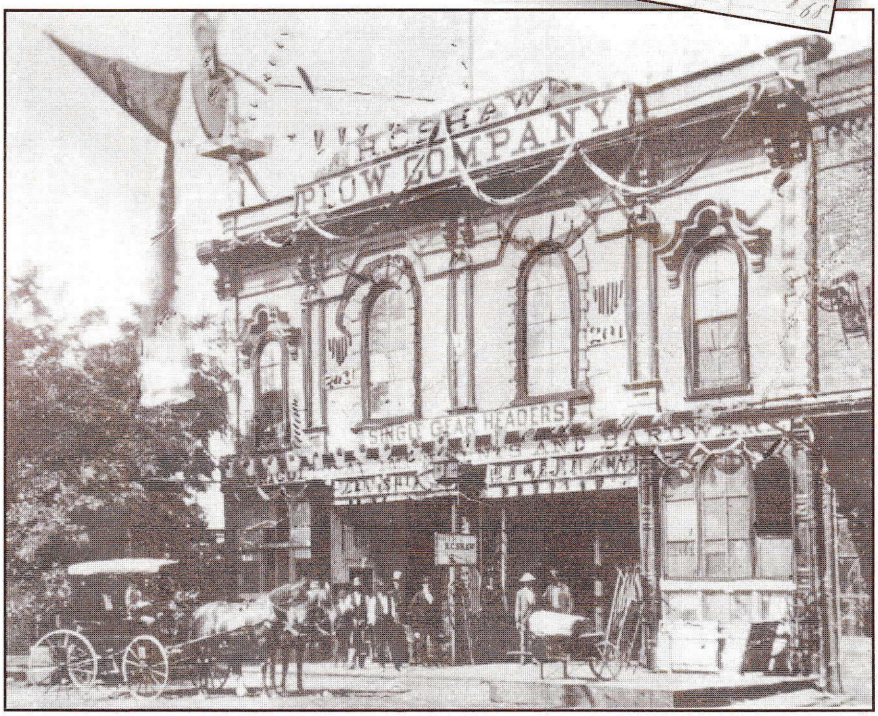
Office and Principal Warerooms, 201 and 203 El Dorado St., Sign "Webster Bros."

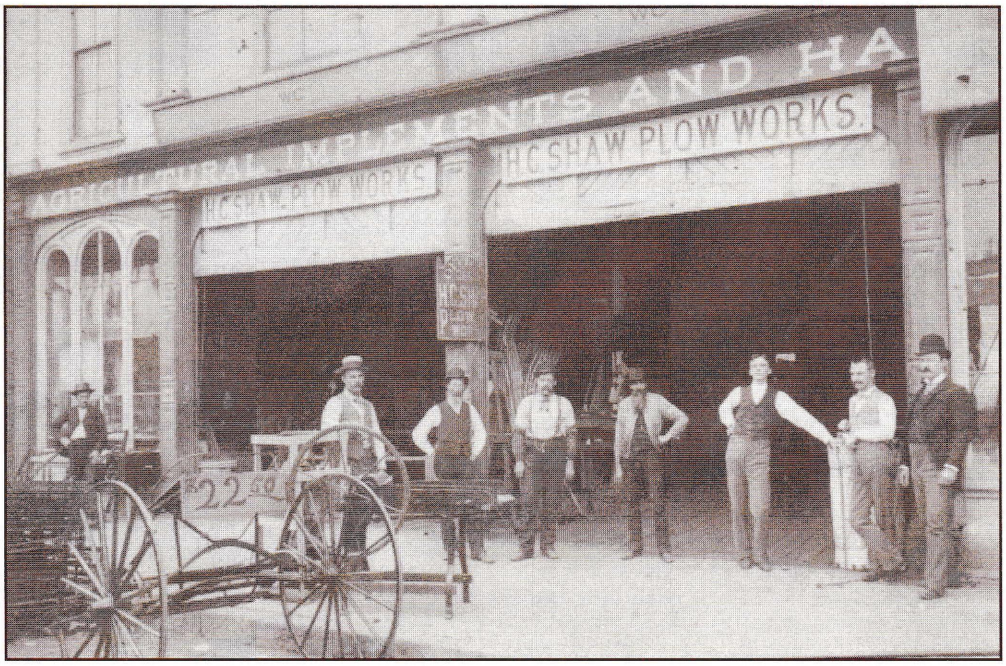
THE BUCKEYE MOWER.

1 - Pair Plow Points

1 - Pair " " Points

Pay Landside Point

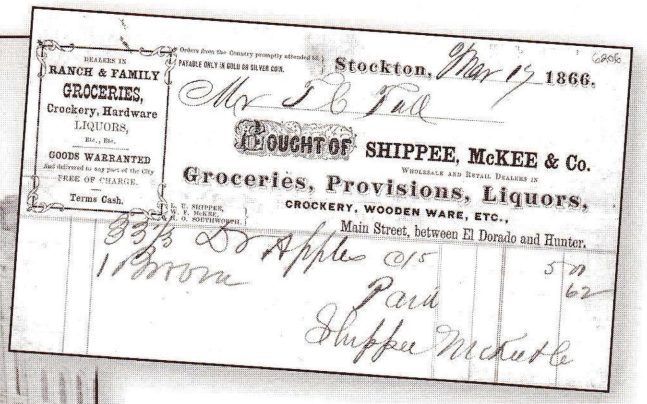



*Top Photo: Stockton, July 4, 1876. (Henry) H. C. Shaw Plow Co. decorated for the Centennial celebration, on El Dorado Street between Main and Market Streets.*

*Bottom Photo: Stockton, circa 1891. H. C. Shaw Plow Works on El Dorado Street.*

*Both photos courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.*




◀ *Stockton, circa 1895; The Independent Order of Odd Fellows and the San Joaquin Lodge of Masons both held their meetings on the upper floors of the Shippee McKee Building, located on the southeast corner of Main and Hunter Streets.*
*Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.*

TERMS CASH.
Stockton Cal. Jan 27th 1885
Messrs Castle & Learned
To AVENUE STABLES, Dr.
I. S. HAINES, Proprietor,
Carriages, Buggies and Saddle Horses to Let.
Horses Boarded by the Day or Week.
Charges Reasonable.
Weber Avenue, bet. American and California Sts.
Jan 27 To Team & Buggy
Rec Payment
I S Haines

▲ *Stockton, circa 1876; Fee's Livery and Feed Stable, (Avenue Stables), located at 425 E. Weber Avenue.*
*Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.*

E. R. Hedges,
Bought of HEDGES & BUCK,
Dealers and Jobbers in
GROCERIES, PROVISIONS, &c.
TERMS CASH.
Hook's Building, 235 and 237 Main Street, corner of San Joaquin.
Paid Hedges & Buck

▲ *Stockton, circa 1895; Pioneer Hall housed the Hedges, Buck & Company grocery company. Located on Weber Avenue, the building was designed by Charles Beasley.*
*Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.*

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